

## [Mrs. Annie Shaw]

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Life history

FOLKLORE:

Miss Effie Cowan,

McLennan County, Texas.

District 8.

File NO. 240.

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REFERENCE:

Interview with Mrs Annie Shaw, San Antonio, Texas,

Visiting in Mart, Texas.

"I was born on the 29th day of October, 1870, near Griffin, Georgia. I was one of seven children by my fathers second wife. Their names were William and Elizabeth Woodward. As I was born at the close of the days of Reconstruction, I can remember many things that were handed down to me by my parent parent's of these days and the days of the Civil War.

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"When the war broke out the communities selected one of their men to stay and look after the women and children, he was in charge of the business of those who had no man in the family left, and my father was the one selected for our little community. They were in nine miles of "Shermans March / to the Sea", and his soldiers spread out in detachments and our community suffered from their raids in the loss of live-stock and feed- suff stuff . So far as I can remember they did not burn or destroy the homes. But the women were insulted and force was used if they tried to prevent the taking of the provisions. They were forced to keep the soldiers in their homes and cook for them when they passed thro' the community.

"My two [?], on my mothers side, were soldiers in the Confederate army. I do not remember which battles they were in, but they were in some of the biggest battles of the war. Some in Tennessee. C.12 - 2/11/41 - Texas 2 I can remember hearing my mother tell about how they were stationed at one time near our home and the women of the community would go to the camp and take their boys clothing and food. My uncle's names were William and Millage Hartsfield. Uncle Will Hartsfield was the [?] father of Mrs J.W. Howard of Mart. Returned from the war and about the year 1875 moved to Texas and settled in Milam County, near the town of Calvert, where he reared his family , and two of his sons are still living in this county.

"My parents were still in Georgia during the days of Reconstruction. Father passed away when I was three years old, but I remember many things my mother told me of these days. The men who were sent from the North to hold the main offices were called carpet-bagger's. Many of them were unprincipled and profiiteered profiteered off the whites. They placed the negroes in the offices over the whites, as history shows, and the white people underwent many humiliating things at the negroes hands during these days. One of the most humiliating things they had to bear was the insults from the negro guards who were stationed along the highways and entrance to the towns. If they spoke to a woman , the women dared not reply.

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"The most appealing thing to my heart that she told me was how the slaves stayed and helped to take care of the family and the crops while the master's were gone to the war. Especially do I remember old Aunt Harriet who had helped to care for us children. When we left , the neighbors came in to bid us good bye. They were lined up in a row and the family marched by and shook hands with each one of the friends to bid them farewell. Aunt Harriet stood at the end of the row, and today, in 3 .

my memory I can see old Aunt Harriet as she stood at the end of the row with her handkerchief in her ha hands, and a red bandana on her head, as she wiped the tears away [?] which were streaming down her face as she bade each one of us good-bye, and told us that she would mee meet us in "de hebbenly lan'," She has long since gone to her heavenly home. I can also bear in memory her lullaby's as she sang us to sleep in our childhood, and when our mother needed us to be kept quiet it was always Aunt Harriet who could hold us spell-bound as she told us the negro folk and fairy tales, and the ghost stories were our special delight.

"Then there is the memory of Aunt Harriet as she would come up to "de big house" to sit with my mother on a Sunday afternoon and talk and have my mother read the Bible to her. Truly her soul has found her "hebbenly home". It was a hard thing for us to leave this dear old country, but the new state of Texas, was calling to the ones who were interested in founding new homes where the land was plentiful and cheap.

"We had relatives who had already moved to Texas and were urging my father to come. They were Frank Foster of Mart, Texas. My Aunt and her family, Mrs Ben Reynolds of Mart, and a brother Will Hartsfield of the county of Milam, near Calver Calvert Texas. All these had written glowing descriptions of the country and so we were filled with the desire to try our fortunes in this new land, and especially were my brothers interested. They were filled with the spirit of adventure and the hope of the rich and cheap land was also a factor of my father's decision to come to Texas. 4 .

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"While we did not get in on the first rush after the war between the states, we came in time to hear, "The sound of that advancing multitude, which soon shall fill these deserts", as described by [William Bryant?] in his beautiful poem to the pioneer settler's.

"We came by way of Atlanta G Ga . And New Orleans. Crossed the Mississippi river on a ferry boat and on through South Texas to Waco, as our tickets were over the new Houston and Texas Central Rail-road, and we were at the little place they called Harrison Switch, about ten miles south of Waco when to our surprise our relatives Mr Foster and Reynolds met the train and brought us on to the little village of Mart. We came in the wagons on the 16th day of December 1884.

"Their object in taking us off the train was in order for us to be in time for a wedding of a cousin, Ada Reynolds and Jack Payne. This was an important affair to the ones concerned. The relatives and the neighbors were there in large numbers and the house was filled to overflowing. Old Brother Hardwick, one of Mart's first preachers, was the officiating minister.

"This wedding occurred at the old Lewis Stephens place, now owned by Dr J.R. Gillam of Mart, about two or three miles north-east of Mart. It was in December and so we had the Christmas decorations. There was a reception after a most bountiful dinner which was partaken of by around a hundred guests. The guests would eat in groups as there was not enough [?] room at the table for all at a time. There were all kinds of good things to eat, and truly we felt that Texas was a place where we 5 .

would not go hungry. The next day the father and mother of the groom gave an "infair" and served dinner to the bridal couple and the relatives.

"We rode to it in wagons and the bride and groom rode horseback. The bride's horse had a side saddle on which she sat side ways. It would have been a shocking thing for the ladies to have ridden astride as the custom is now. She had on a long riding skirt which

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extended below her shoes, if she had fallen off the horse her feet would have become tangled up in the skirt.

“As we had just arrived from Georgia where it was a timbered country and every one had their carriages and buggies, the change to riding in the open prairie in an open wagon and the ladies riding horseback the contrast was noticeable, to say the least, to us. I had never seen a side saddle before, and I did not understand how one could stay on one without falling.

“Back in Georgia we had the big open fireplace where the fire burned all day in the winter and the embers were kept all night, The fire place had the big andirons and the log of wood for the night kept a warm glow as we slept by its light. Here in Texas they used the wood heaters, the first ones we ever saw.

“I can also remember how it struck us as novel, the western accent of speech which our relatives had acquired. To our great surprise within two years after we came and when other relatives from Georgia came, they were equally shocked and surprised that we had acquired the same accent ! 6 “Over in the / present cemetery at Mart, was where the little house that was used for a church and school combined , stood. This was the first school and church house in the community. As I understand it the first school was taught for three months by a Mr Spickard in the year 1879 with an enrollment of fifteen pupils and the winter of 1880 Mrs Laura Cowan, who was our neighbor when we came to Mart, and whom we learned to honor and love, taught the next school with an enrollment of twenty eight.

“In the winter of 1885 and 1886, a Mr and Mrs Chambers taught in this same school house. I was a pupil and by this time there were many more children in the community, as well as I can remember there were around fifty pupils. I do not recall all the names of the families who were represented, but some of them were the Howards, Reynolds, Stephens, Ingrams, Tulls, Barron, Criswell, Vaughan, Suttles, Lumpkin, and I think Mrs

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Cowans Cowan's oldest child E.J. was one of the pupils, also the Dunn boys Rogers, and Valentines.

"When the winter term closed Mr Chambers got up a private school and I assisted him , to pay for my tuition. I was fifteen years of age at the time and was still anxious to keep up with my studies. I have since taught in the State school, but was never so proud of any school as this, my first experience under my teacher and with my neighbors children for my pupils. 7 "When we came to the Mart community in 1884 we rented land from an old bachelor by the name of Brooks. The country was a ranch and stock country, the men raised their grain but not until a few years later did they commence to raise cotton. Our landlord owned ranches and city property in Waco, but was a confirmed old bachelor [?] any Many were the stories told of why he did not get married, one was that he took a barrel and every time he would eat a meal he would throw an eual equal amount in the barrel, at the end of the month when he looked into the barrel he said that it would break any man to feed a woman and he dared not try it!

"We lived on what is now the Eskew Dairy place about half a mile north of Mart, to the south of us there lived the Townsend family who were among the first settlers and to the eas east across the road was the family of Mr and Mrs H.C. Cowan whom I have mentioned Mrs Cowan as being the second teacher to teach the Mart school. Better neighbors could not be found and many times their neighborly kindness helped us in sickness and in our trials of the new country to re- adjus adjust ourselves to the new life. There is a fond place in my memory for thes these our nearest neighbors.

"Mart was a little village , with the stores situated on a public road on what is now South Carpenter Street, at the intersection of the street which turns off to the present school house. There were three or four stores. That of W.B. Stodghill, Ward Hewin was working for Mr Stodghill, but later owned a business of his own. Mr John Pearce was a clerk in one of the stores. Also J. W. Howard who operates a grocery today in Mart, Marts oldest grocery man.

Captain Patillo from Waco was the Post Master and Dr R.L. Smith, now of Waco, was just beginning to practice medicine. Then there was Dr Carpenter and Dr Stephens. The minister minister's I remember best was Brother Suttle and Hardwick who lived until their passing to the Great Beyond in this commu community .

"In 1900 I married Sam Shaw and moved to Henrietta Texas, this was still an unsettled or thinly settled country and the stock and ranchmen had drifted farther west from Central Texas. We did not like it here, it was so open and the wind's blew so hard, so we mved moved to New Mexico, and took up a government claim, which we still own. But the winds were so high and the sand would drift so badly that we found it not to our liking and so we came later to San Antonio, where we found the climate much more to our fancy, much milder winters and here my husband has been in business and we reared our children.

"We had three girls, who are now married and have homes of their own, they are Mrs Ethel Fisher of Fredericksburg, Mrs Irene Gipson of ElDorado Arkansas, and Mrs James Martin of San Antonio. We love our home and our neighbors, and church in this city, but the dearest place in our hearts were the kind friend's and neighbors who helped us to adjust our lives when we came to Texas and found it so different in its unsettled condition from our home back in Georgia, in the little village of Mart, Texas. These people also had left their homes in the old states and were among the best friends and neighbors we ever had the good fortune to find.